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MS 630 Ministry and Evangelism in the Small Church

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Asbury Theological Seminary
Spring Term, 2002 Wednesday 2:30 – 5:15 p.m. SH404
Professor: Crandall
Credit: Three Hours

Prospectus for the Course

MS 630 / ME 760

EVANGELISM IN THE SMALL CHURCH

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

An intensive examination of the historical, theological, sociological and pragmatic dynamics of smaller congregations with attention to the special challenges and opportunities for evangelism effectiveness in such settings.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Smaller congregations and the pastors who serve them frequently find it difficult to function effectively in evangelism using models and strategies most commonly publicized. An abundance of recent research and literature brings encouragement and new challenges. It will be the purpose of this course to acquaint the student both with the heart of this literature and with a field experience in order that a confident, new perspective and commitment might be achieved for evangelistic ministry in the context of smaller congregations.

III. PROCEDURE AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course consists of thirteen class sessions meeting Tuesdays from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. Instruction will include lectures, guest pastors, videos, discussion, field work, reading and analytical reflection. The required texts (450 pages) and 750 additional pages are considered part of the curriculum and a reading report must be turned in at the end of the semester. The reading, a course project, and a notebook will constitute the grade for the course.

A. READING REQUIREMENTS (25%)

A total of 1200 pages is required and constitutes 25% of the course grade. Failure to complete the reading assigned will affect the final grade.

Required texts:

1. Ron Crandall, Turnaround Strategies for the Small Church (1995)
2. Steve Bierly, How to Thrive as a Small Church Pastor (1998)
3. Lyle Schaller, The Small Membership Church: Scenarios for Tomorrow (1994)
4. Anthony Pappas, Entering the World of the Small Church (2000)

Students who have read # 1 above for ME501 must substitute a text from those listed below.

Additional texts recommended include: (newer and basic texts in bold)

1. **Steven Burt, Hazel Roper**, The Little Church That Could: Raising Small Church Esteem, Judson Press, 2000.
2. **Kennon Callhan**, Small, Strong Congregations: Creating Strengths and Health for Your Congregation, Jossey-Bass, 2000.

3. **Steven Goodwin**, Catching the Next Wave: Leadership Strategies for Turnaround Churches, Augsburg Press, 1999.
4. **Jung et.al.**, Rural Ministry: The Shape of the Renewal to Come, Abingdon, 1998.
5. **Nancy Foltz**, ed., Religious Education in the Small Membership Church, 1990.
6. **Craig Brian Larson**, Pastoral Grit: The Strength to Stand and Stay, 1998.
7. Steve Bierly, Help for the Small Church Pastor.
8. Steven Burt, Activating Leadership in the Small Church.
9. Rick Chromey, Youth Ministry in Small Churches.
10. Cosgrove and Hatfield, Church Conflict: The Hidden Systems Behind the Fights.
11. Robert Coote, ed., Mustard-Seed Churches.
12. R. Robert Cueni, What Ministers Can't Learn in Seminary.
13. **Carl Dudley**, Making the Small Church Effective.
14. **Carl Dudley**, Congregations in Transition (coming Feb 2002).
15. Dudley and Walwrath, Developing Your Small Church's Potential.
16. Gary Exman, Get Ready, Get Set, Grow.
17. Nancy Foltz, Caring for the Small Church: Insights from Women in Ministry.
18. Donald Griggs, Christian Education in the Small Church.
19. Kent Hunter, The Lord's Harvest and the Rural Church.
20. Ron Klassen & John Koessler, No Little Place.
21. Aubrey Malphurs, Pouring New Wine into Old Wineskins.
22. Doran McCarty, Leading the Small Church.
23. Wayne Oats, The Care of Troublesome People.
24. Anthony Pappas, Money, Motivation and Mission in The Small Church.
25. Lyle Schaller, The Small Church Is Different.
26. Lyle Schaller, The Middle Sized Church.
27. Marshall Shelly, Well-Intentioned Dragons.
28. Rose Sims, The Dream Lives On or It Can Happen Anywhere.
29. Bill Sullivan, Ten Steps to Breaking the 200 Barrier.
30. Laurence Wagley, Preaching With the Small Congregation.
31. Douglas Walwrath, New Possibilities for Small Churches.
32. Will Willimon & Robert Wilson, Preaching and Worship in the Small Church.
33. Robert Wilson, The Multi-Church Parish.
34. David Young, A New Heart and a New Spirit.
35. Wayne Zunkel, Growing The Small Church.

B. CLASS PROJECT (50%)

Each student will participate in a class project constituting 50% of the final grade: 35% from the group report and 15% from a personal reflection paper.

1. Participate as part of a team (3-5 persons) interviewing a minimum of 8 members (4 long-term, 4 new) and the pastor of a smaller congregation in the area. The preference is for a church showing greater than 10% growth (or decline) in the last 3 years. Using an interview guide provided (adjustments welcome), consolidate your information, observations, insights and recommendations into a "Report" (35% of grade) to be sent to the pastor (copied to the instructor) with an appropriate cover letter. In addition each student will separately submit to the professor a 5 page personal reflection paper (15% of grade) of additional observations, lessons, difficulties and values of the team-interview

experience. Students may work alone on this project only if geographical isolation prohibits cooperation.

2. Under very special circumstances alternative projects may be approved.

C. MS630--MA and M.Div STUDENTS: NOTEBOOK (25%)

Each student will be required to keep a notebook including class notes, reading notes (following the outline of a form included) on all texts and articles read, articles copied, additional research or correspondence, and an annotated bibliography (1-3 sentences describing the contribution of the book, article, report, etc.) on the Small Church of at least 30 entries beyond the required texts.

D. ME760--TH.M., D.MISS, or Ph.D. STUDENTS: ALTERNATIVE REQUIREMENTS (25%)

Advanced degree students will not be required to prepare the notebook. Instead, 25% of the final grade will be based on: an annotated bibliography of at least 40 entries (10%), a critical book review of 750 words following a guide provided (10%), and 15-20 minutes of class leadership examining some critical issue raised by the text reviewed (5%). Schedule this with the instructor.

IV. PROPOSED TOPICS AND SCHEDULE

Although we may vary slightly from the plan below, our intended course outline is as follows:

TOPIC

Biblical and Theological Issues

Smaller Churches Through History

The Sociology of Smaller Churches

Pastors and Small Church Revitalization

Rekindling the Spirit

Overcoming Obstacles

Mission and Evangelism

Developing Leaders and Disciples

Churches in Changing Communities

Guest speakers as they are available and group reports near the end of the semester will round out our schedule.

V. DUE DATES

The Group Projects and Personal Reflection Papers are due in class **WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2002**. All other requirements are due by **4:00 p.m. WEDNESDAY, MAY 22, 2002**.